







Customers Incivility, Country-of-origin Effects on the Tourism Sector, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Testing a Mediatlional Model

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Abstract

In the recent era, the country of origin (COO) effect is crucial to measure consumer behavior in the tourism industry. The present study delves into how customer incivility affects employees' emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction levels with COO effects. It also investigates how these elements influence tourism sector employees' desire to go beyond the job responsibilities as part of organizational citizenship behavior with the origin of the local country (COO). Analyzing the received data from the tourism and hotel industries reveals that customer incivility significantly contributes to emotional exhaustion, thereby negatively affecting employees' job satisfaction and their inclination to be involved in organizational citizenship behavior with COO effects. Emotional exhaustion reduces job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. The current study is confined to Pakistani tourism sector employees showing country of origin (n =287), supporting the majority of the proposed linkages. The study narrated the research consequences to examine how customer incivility, emotional exhaustion, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior are all related to the country of origin. The findings provide a valuable contribution to the literature on the chosen subject.

Keywords: Country of origin effects; Job Satisfaction; Customer Incivility; Organizational Citizenship behavior; Emotional Exhaustion

1 Introduction

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Tourism is crucial for economic growth and employment creation (Jaffar et al., [2024](#)). Country of origin (COO) effect, marketing educational services, and culture is vital for consumer behavior for purchase decisions (Al-Sulaiti, [2002](#)). According to Baker and Kim ([2020](#)) debate, employees are frequently required to prioritize consumers, which means providing superior customer service is imperative in tourism with country of origin effects (Tan, et al., [2024](#); (Al-Sulaiti & Baker, [1998](#)). Employees may face rude, pompous, and confrontational client behavior despite their best attempts to maintain this level of service that is crucial in the service and tourism sectors ((Jaffar et al., [2021](#); Al-Sulaiti et al., [2023](#)). However, supervisors usually counsel staff members to put up with and adjust to this rudeness from customers, viewing it as an essential component of their professional duties (Kamran-Disfani et al., [2022](#)). According to Hur et al. ([2022](#)), these forms of advice and reconciliation do not only not work to decrease workplace incivility, but they actively encourage its rise and widen the power gap between employers and personnel in the service industry. Inconsiderate customers, whether on purpose or by accident, can cause physical and psychological injuries to employees (Baker & Kim, [2020](#); Boukis et al., [2020](#)). It may result in issues including low work ethic, poor service quality, and increased employee turnover intentions, all of which could impede the service industry's overall growth (Li et al., [2021](#)). Examining the detrimental effects of rude customers and delineating the prerequisites for reducing adverse effects are crucial for theory and practice. Within the service sector, the hospitality sector is a symbolically significant and representative industry. Employees in the hotel sector are focused on conducting and achieving successful customer interactions since the services they provide are by their very nature based on an interactive nature (Fan & Mattila, [2021](#)). The service experience can be shaped by the quality of interactions between clients and staff (Hwang et al., [2022](#)). Customer incivility has become a key area of research within the hospitality industry (Boukis et al., [2023](#)). According to Hwang et al. ([2022](#)), rude customers significantly cause stress at work. According to research by Boukis et al. (2020) and Pu et al. (2022), Frontline hotel personnel frequently deal with this kind of incivility. Furthermore, Cheng et al. ([2020](#)) note that emotive, significantly negative sentiments are often used as a vehicle for customer antagonism.

Customer incivility cannot be a short-term factor in negative behaviors like the intention to leave, which calls for careful thought and long-term decision-making (Bani-Melhem, [2020](#)). As a result, the primary reason for this study is the necessity to uncover the mediating elements between consumer incivility, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior (Muhammad, 2023). Hotel managers must possess this insight to direct staff management and maximize industry systems properly. Previous research on harshness from customers has concentrated chiefly on staff members' reactions during or after the occurrence. Current studies (Cheng et al., [2020](#); Chan et al., [2022](#); Lages et al., [2023](#)) highlight how significant this problem is. According to Alola et al. ([2019](#)), hostile clients significantly cause front desk hotel staff's emotional exhaustion and work stress. Abundant research suggests that rude customers may harm employees' emotional health (Shin et al., [2022](#)).

Consequently, this study examines whether customer incivility leads to adverse outcomes for hospitality staff, including emotional exhaustion and diminished job satisfaction (Sattar et al., [2024](#)). Additionally, emotional exhaustion negatively affects organizational citizenship behavior (Alola et al., [2019](#)). However, further investigations are required due to the limited research on customer incivility and its repercussions on job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. Friction is more likely to arise in exchanges that last a long time. However, the old saying "harmony is precious" still stands. However, with the sheer training techniques, the challenges the employees confront can better be addressed. The hospitality sector must actively respond to market development trends to offer better-quality services (Bani-Melhem, [2020](#)).

The present research is focused on investigating the impact of customer incivility on job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior of employees in Pakistan's hospitality industry

of Pakistan. Moreover, it explores the impact of emotional exhaustion as the mediator among the variables

2 Literature Review

2.1 Customer Incivility

Customer incivility is minor, inappropriate behavior with country of origin (COO) effects that breaches mutual respect norms in the workplace, lacking a clear intent to harm the target (Andersson & Pearson, 1999a; Hur et al., 2022). These actions are disrespectful, inconsiderate, and impolite. According to this description, incivility is interpersonal, involving a target (the person observing the incivility) and a perpetrator (the one acting uncivilly). Nevertheless, there are instances of incivility where the target is an organization or employee, and the offender is the consumer (Cheng et al., 2020). Customer incivility entails actions that violate social norms of respect and kindness, typically manifesting as minor acts of disrespect or rudeness from individuals in a client role for harming an employee (Boukis et al., 2020; Hwang et al., 2022). It is essential to differentiate customer incivility from other types of interpersonal conflicts, such as workplace bullying, assault, and abusive supervision (Davenport et al., 1999; Estes & Wang, 2008; Tepper, 2000; Lages et al., 2023).

Disparate concepts centered on deliberate actions, incivility addresses situations where the intention to cause harm is not fully discernible. As a result, the literature classifies incivility into two distinct categories: everyday annoyances and workplace abuse (Andersson & Pearson, 1999b; Cortina et al., 2001a; Pu et al., 2022). As defined by Lazarus (1984), a daily annoyance is a recurring unpleasant, upsetting, or disturbing event that poses a threat to one's well-being, such as time constraints, family conflicts, or workplace stress (Bani-Melhem, 2020; Cortina et al., 2001a; Boukis et al., 2020). The expression would be a good fit for incivility because, particularly in the service sector, dealing with inconsiderate, nasty people daily might occur at work. Over time, a customer using a cell phone or failing to say "thank you" could negatively impact someone's well-being. The daily hassles scale, as discussed in the Affective event theory, was devised by Delongis et al. (1982). It included items similar to customer incivility, where the customers are ruthless and employee emotional labor increases over time (Bani-Melhem, 2020; Ivancevich, 1986). Relationship problems with clients or coworkers are According to research by Beaudoin and Edgar (2003), employees believe that social issues, including relationships between colleagues and customers, are the biggest threats to their mental well-being, sense of fulfillment in their work, and desire to stick with the company (Shin et al., 2022). The group of social-environmental nuisances includes incivility.

Undoubtedly, there is a persistent need for further investigation into consumer incivility due to its potential negative impacts on organizational and individual outcomes. Another reason highlighting the significance of studying consumer incivility is its prevalence. Hecker, (2005) and Grandey et al. (2007) have reported that customer service staff have encountered aggressiveness from customers more frequently than from their colleagues, which is a far more significant violation of social norms than incivility (Baker & Kim, 2020). Lesser deviant behaviors, like rudeness, are also expected from clients more frequently than coworkers. Therefore, this is a stressor that employers in service-related fields should take seriously. The fact that service personnel have less influence over clients is another factor putting them in danger. Workplace rudeness typically cascades downhill (Cortina et al., 2001b; Hwang et al., 2022). Staff members who hold less authority often become the object of rudeness from others who hold more authority inside the company. However, the nature of their work places customer support representatives in a unique situation (Andersson & Pearson, 1999a; Baker & Kim, 2020).

The concept of customer service inherently establishes a power dynamic that favors the customer despite the employee's role of serving the client and theoretically holding a higher position.

Customers and clients are essential to an organization's operations, granting them considerable influence. Pearson et al. (2000) argue that there is a prevailing "whatever you want" mentality in many social contexts, with little consideration for others. Supporting this notion, Twenge and Foster (2008) indicate that younger generations are increasingly self-oriented. Moreover, research by Wink and Donahue (1995) demonstrates that this trend extends beyond college samples, suggesting that narcissism remains a stable trait well into middle age from the early twenties. Furthermore, modern customers know their power in their relationship with the provider. Customers perceive the abundance of options available for most products—consider the variety of soap brands—as power.

2.2 Emotional Exhaustion

Cole et al. (2012) assert that exhaustion is a form of occupational stress resulting from an accumulation of work-related pressures with country of origin (COO) effects. It is a chronic stress reaction particularly prevalent among service sector employees (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Maslach (1982) states burnout encompasses diminished personal accomplishment, depersonalization, and emotional exhaustion. It arises when an entity's emotional reserves are depleted. Depersonalization occurs when individuals develop negative attitudes towards their colleagues or those they serve (Maslach, 1982). Feelings of reduced personal accomplishment arise when individuals perceive that they are not meeting job demands or that their efforts are not contributing to the organization's success (Maslach, 1982). Therefore, depersonalization and emotional exhaustion correlate more strongly with each other than individual accomplishment (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). As a result, researchers have traditionally identified burnout and its components in detail (Bakker et al., 2005). Furthermore, personal accomplishment has the lowest correlation with the other factors out of the three burnout aspects (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

van Jaarsveld et al. (2010) believe that since service employment is seen as emotional labor, burnout has been well-studied in the hospitality sector. Research suggests that employees' burnout is intensified by heavy workloads and interactions with customers (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Employee's job satisfaction and organizational commitment suffer from burnout (Chan et al., 2015). Employees perceive client mistreatment as adverse affective events (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). In the hospitality industry, staff cannot pick their customers; customers are more influenced than employees (Kern & Grandey, 2009). Employees are, therefore, unable to prevent adverse emotional situations. As a result of these adverse affective experiences, employees frequently encounter negative emotions such as anger and sadness (Basch & Fisher, 1998).

Emotional job demands are particularly crucial for service professionals, as they influence their expectations and experiences (Le Blanc et al., 2001). Serving customers raises emotional demands in service workers, mostly linked to occupational stress (Veldhoven et al., 2002). Employee job expectations may rise due to stressful customer interactions (Kim et al., 2007). More precisely, employees' perceptions of job expectations may rise when they witness customer disrespect during customer service interactions (van Jaarsveld et al., 2010). This may interfere with their ability to communicate genuine emotions, particularly when encountering customer intolerance. Thus, managing challenging customer interactions can place significant emotional pressure on individuals in the service sector, as it represents a primary source of job stress (Le Blanc et al., 2000).

2.3 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a positive emotional state resulting from an individual's assessment of their work or work experiences (Locke, 1976). It involves reconciling the difference between what one expects or values from a job and what one receives (Heslop et al., 2002). Literature suggests that dissatisfaction with work can contribute to job stress (Tongchaiprasit & Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2016). Similarly, Dodanwala and Santoso (2022) identified a negative correlation in the Sri Lankan

construction industry, concluding that various aspects of job satisfaction impact the stress levels experienced by construction personnel.

Reducing emotional exhaustion can help organizations manage turnover intentions, enhance job satisfaction, and foster improved organizational citizenship behavior (Dodanwala & Santoso, [2022](#); Tarigan & Ariani, [2015](#); Yukongdi & Shrestha, [2020](#)). Organizations must implement effective rehabilitation strategies to address job dissatisfaction and mitigate turnover intentions. Elevated work role stressors diminish job satisfaction, indirectly increasing turnover intentions (Liu et al., [2019](#)).

2.4 Organizational Citizenship Behavior

OCB was introduced by Organ (1988) and has been recognized for over three decades (Shukla, [2021](#)). OCB refers to discretionary behaviors performed by individuals that enhance the organization's overall effectiveness but are not formally acknowledged or rewarded by the official reward system (Romaiha et al., [2019](#)). Organ's concept was influenced by earlier distinctions made by Chester ([1938](#)) and Katz ([1964](#)), which differentiated between in-role behavior—tasks directly associated with one's job—and extra-role behavior, which includes voluntary actions that go beyond one's defined responsibilities with COO effects (Shukla, [2021](#)). However, this kind of unplanned conduct—known as extra-role behavior—does help the organization achieve its objectives. Organ and other academics used the OCB lens to provide the concept more specificity.

2.5 Customer Incivility, Emotional Exhaustion, and Job Satisfaction

Despite being a prevalent occurrence, few studies have specifically examined the impacts of customer incivility. This scarcity of research may be attributed to the ongoing development of the construct (Burnfield et al., [2004](#); Chen et al., [2021](#)). Due to the scarcity of research, including ideas from similar but unrelated fields helps develop a theoretical knowledge of the consequences of rude customers (Booyens et al., [2023](#)). One such alternative can be found in the literature on everyday social problems on the job. Beaudoin and Edgar ([2003](#)) discovered, for example, that problems in general—social hassles specifically—were associated with disruptions to job satisfaction and productivity (Junça-Silva et al., [2020](#)). According to Luong and Rogelberg's ([2005](#)) research, everyday exhaustion and perceptions of effort were positively correlated with meeting overload, which is primarily seen as a social inconvenience. Emotional exhaustion, an essential aspect of burnout, encompasses feelings of powerlessness, despair, and entrapment. These emotions will likely emerge when customer service employees are repeatedly subjected to rudeness and hold limited power in their roles (Junça-Silva et al., [2020](#)).

Sliter et al. ([2010](#)) characterize customer incivility as low-intensity inappropriate behavior displayed by individuals in a customer role, which may aim to harm an employee and contravene social norms of decency and respect (Chen et al., [2021](#); Sommovigo et al., [2019](#)). It is crucial to recognize that customers who exhibit unpleasant or impolite behavior toward staff may not always have malicious intentions. Given that interactions with unpleasant and disrespectful clients are commonplace in the service industry (Cho et al., [2016](#); Prasetyo et al., [2021](#)). The buildup of incidents involving rudeness from customers can be perceived as stressful, even if a single occurrence may not have a noticeable negative impact (Han et al., [2010](#)). Grandey et al. ([2002](#)) conducted a study in the hospitality sector and discovered that customer misconduct is a frequent phenomenon (Booyens et al., [2023](#); Sommovigo et al., [2019](#)). Behaviors, such as verbal violence (Sliter et al., [2012](#)). Workers said they encounter nuisance from clients ten times a day on average (Grandey et al., [2004](#)). According to research, uncivil customers can lead to significant stress levels and emotional tiredness (Hur et al., [2015](#); Prasetyo et al., [2021](#)). Additionally, workers who encounter uncivil customers frequently engage in non-productive activities at work (Manandhar & Uprety, [2022](#); Walker et al., [2014](#)). According to Torres et al. ([2017](#)), occupational stress instigated by unkind customers reduces job performance and raises counterproductive behaviors.

H1: *Customer Incivility is significantly associated with Job Satisfaction*

H2: *Emotional Exhaustion serves as the mediator between customer incivility and job satisfaction*

2.6 Customer Incivility, emotional exhaustion, and Organizational citizenship behavior

Additionally, OCB has been examined concerning more widely used variables (Nurjanah et al., 2020; Ritz et al., 2014) and work satisfaction (Van Scotter 2000). Lee and Gong (2024) assert that obnoxious, inconsiderate, and arrogant behavior on the part of clients toward staff members is against social standards (Frey-Cordes et al., 2023; Kang et al., 2020; van Jaarsveld et al., 2010; Yagil, 2021). As a result, nastiness from customers toward service personnel is seen as deviating from the standard protocol of a service contract (Henkel et al., 2017). Conversely, workers who exhibit low work engagement—such as those who encounter rudeness from clients—are less inclined to apply their knowledge and abilities to assist and serve others, even when they are capable of meeting client's needs and going above and beyond what is required of them (Bakker & Xanthopoulou, 2013; Luu, 2019). Employees who are not as involved are emotionally distant and less motivated to work hard (Lyu et al., 2016). Their dedication and excitement are reduced, and they lack the perseverance and desire to complete jobs effectively. According to Lyu et al. (2016), as a result, they are less likely to possess the stamina to go above and beyond and exhibit discretionary service-oriented OCBs (Kang et al., 2020).

Therefore, it is suggested that limiting job involvement will reduce customer rudeness and decrease service-oriented OCBs.

H3: *Customer Incivility is significantly associated with Organizational citizenship behavior*

H4: *Emotional Exhaustion serves as the mediator between customer incivility and Organizational citizenship behavior*

3 Methodology

3.1 Sampling and Data Collection

The research's target audience is Frontline staff employed at full-service restaurants in Pakistan. Restaurant employees can provide a comparatively high level of personalized care and engage with customers more frequently (Han et al., 2010; Yüksel & Yüksel, 2002). Approximately 287 front-line restaurant employees were reached by convenient sampling, and the structured questionnaire was submitted (Alhitmi et al., 2024; Tabassum et al., 2024). Both the research ethics and the respondents' anonymity were considered. The data was analyzed through PLS-SEM. The questionnaire was designed specifically to address the research objectives.

3.2 Variable measurement

This study employed an adapted form of the customer incivility scale, developed by Wilson and Holmvolll (2013), specifically adapted for the hospitality industry, which includes ten items. Emotional exhaustion was evaluated using a three-item scale revised by Watkins et al. (2015). Job satisfaction was measured with a three-item scale updated by Duan et al. (2021). Organizational citizenship behavior, both toward individuals (OCBI) and the organization (OCBO), was assessed through two sets of four questions each, as outlined by Lee and Allen (2002). Contributors consistently rated their responses from (1) never to (5) using a five-point Likert scale with options.

4 Data Analysis

Researchers analyzed the data using a statistical method called Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to understand the relationships between the variables (Ringle et al., 2015). Smart PLS -3 is a logical choice due to its advanced and robust variance-based

methodology, making it a second-generation analysis tool (Hair et al., 2017). Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was chosen to encompass both direct and indirect effects (Hair et al., 2017; Kock & Hadaya, 2018). As the primary objective of this study centers on predicting the influence of various factors on employee behavior (endogenous variables), PLS-SEM demonstrably aligns with this objective (Hair et al., 2017). Examining the data distribution is useful even though it is not usually considered normal in PLS-SEM modeling. To understand the data's distribution, the researcher created charts called histograms and normal probability plots using SPSS 27 software (Pallant, 2020). The data from the study were distributed appropriately, according to this analysis. It was chosen because the PLS-SEM method can handle both formative and reflecting structures. The study assessed the reliability of the measurement model before examining the relationships between variables (Hair et al., 2017). Since all constructs were reflective and first-order (meaning indicators directly measure them), the focus was on the strength of the relationships between each indicator and its underlying construct. Table I likely shows that all indicator loadings fell within an acceptable range (between 0.710 and 0.868 according to (Duarte & Raposo, 2010; Hair et al., 2017). This suggests that the indicators accurately reflect their respective constructs. The measuring model is displayed in Figure 1.

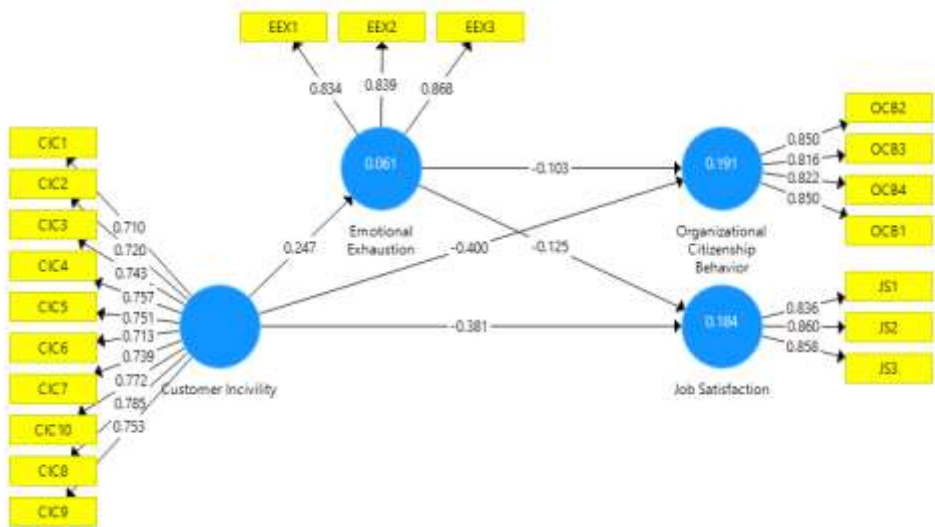


Figure 1: Measurement Model

An evaluation was performed to verify the measurement model's reliability and validity and confirm its accuracy in capturing the intended constructs. Internal consistency reliability, which measures how well multiple indicators align in assessing a single construct, was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR). The results, which ranged from 0.804 to 0.911, demonstrate robust internal consistency (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 2017).

Convergent validity, which examines the extent to which indicators converge on a single underlying construct, was assessed using the average variance extracted (AVE). Scores above the 0.5 threshold confirm convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017; Chin, 1998). Discriminant validity, ensuring that the constructs are distinct from each other, was evaluated through the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio, cross-loadings, and the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2015).

Table 1: Reliability and Validity Statistics

Construct	Items	Loading	α	Composite Reliability	AVE
Emotional Exhaustion	EEX1	0.834	0.804	0.884	0.718
	EEX2	0.839			
	EEX3	0.868			
Job Satisfaction	JS1	0.836	0.811	0.888	0.725
	JS2	0.860			
	JS3	0.858			
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	OCB1	0.850	0.855	0.902	0.697
	OCB2	0.850			
	OCB3	0.816			
	OCB4	0.822			
Customer Incivility	CIC1	0.710	0.911	0.926	0.554
	CIC10	0.772			
	CIC2	0.720			
	CIC3	0.743			
	CIC4	0.757			
	CIC5	0.751			
	CIC6	0.713			
	CIC7	0.739			
	CIC8	0.785			
	CIC9	0.753			

To ensure the measured concepts (constructs) were distinct, we assessed discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker method. This method requires the square root of a construct's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) to be higher than its correlations with other constructs in the study. Table II shows that the AVE square roots were more significant than the constructs' correlations. Hair et al. (2017) also suggest that the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) should be below 0.1 for good discriminant validity. The results in Table III likely confirm that the HTMT met this threshold. Finally, to further strengthen the evidence that the constructs are distinct, each indicator should have its strongest association (loading) with its intended construct compared to other constructs. Table IV likely displays these cross-loading values. Overall, these evaluations provide strong evidence that the measurement model meets the necessary standards for reliability and validity.

Table 2: Fornell-Larcker Test

	1	2	3	4
Emotional Exhaustion	0.847			
Job Satisfaction	-0.219	0.851		
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	-0.202	0.816	0.835	
Customer Incivility	0.247	-0.412	-0.426	0.745

Table 3: Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio

	1	2	3
Emotional Exhaustion			
Job Satisfaction	0.266		
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.243	0.978	
Customer Incivility	0.286	0.468	0.472

Table 4: Cross-Loading

	Emotional Exhaustion	Job Satisfaction	Organizational Citizenship Behavior	Customer Incivility
EEX1	0.834	-0.166	-0.164	0.189
EEX2	0.839	-0.176	-0.171	0.202
EEX3	0.868	-0.210	-0.179	0.233
JS1	-0.140	0.836	0.672	-0.325

JS2	-0.195	0.860	0.689	-0.376
JS3	-0.218	0.858	0.722	-0.348
OCB1	-0.177	0.702	0.850	-0.383
OCB2	-0.189	0.694	0.850	-0.356
OCB3	-0.158	0.657	0.816	-0.312
OCB4	-0.150	0.669	0.822	-0.364
CIC1	0.196	-0.209	-0.264	0.710
CIC10	0.224	-0.381	-0.366	0.772
CIC2	0.117	-0.274	-0.273	0.720
CIC3	0.196	-0.365	-0.383	0.743
CIC4	0.129	-0.361	-0.361	0.757
CIC5	0.193	-0.295	-0.333	0.751
CIC6	0.231	-0.260	-0.259	0.713
CIC7	0.176	-0.296	-0.314	0.739
CIC8	0.181	-0.302	-0.303	0.785
CIC9	0.193	-0.263	-0.265	0.753

The next step focused on analyzing the relationships between the variables (structural model) using bootstrapping, visually represented in Figure III. Before proceeding, we checked for multicollinearity, where variables are highly correlated and can influence analysis results. This was done by examining the variance inflation factor (VIF) (Hair et al., 2017). The VIF score is less than 5, indicating no collinearity in the data. The results show the strong explanatory power of the studied structural model, with a weak explanatory power for customer incivility for emotional exhaustion (R2 of 0.061). Moreover, all predictors explained the medium explanatory power for employee job satisfaction (R2 of 0.184) and the medium explanatory power for organizational citizenship behavior (R2 of 0.191) (Hair et al., 2017).

Endogenous Variables	R ²	T Stat	P Values
Emotional Exhaustion	0.061	3.053	0.002
Job Satisfaction	0.184	5.024	0.000
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	0.191	4.952	0.000

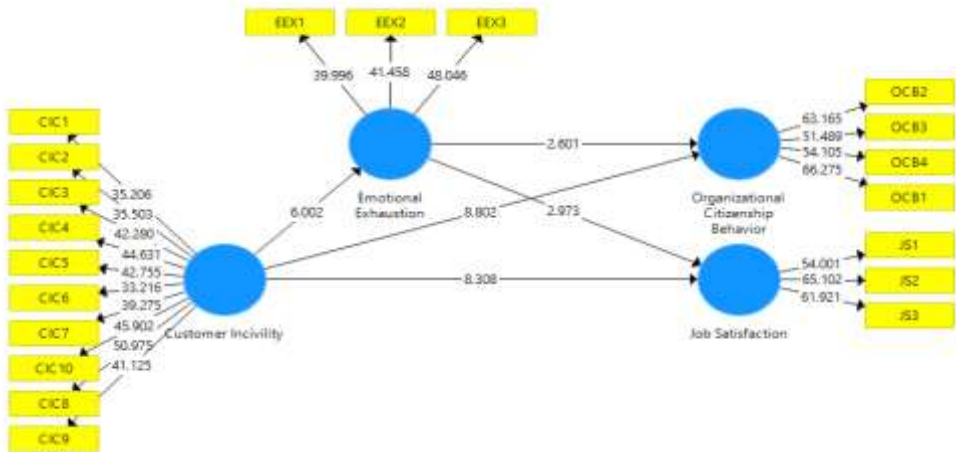


Figure 2: Structural Model

Table 5: Hypothesis Testing

Hypotheses	β	S. error	t-value	p-value	Decisions	Confidence Interval	
						2.50%	97.50%
Emotional Exhaustion → Job Satisfaction	-0.125	0.044	2.832	0.005	Supported	-0.208	-0.034
Emotional Exhaustion → Organizational Citizenship Behavior	-0.103	0.042	2.455	0.014	Supported	-0.182	-0.014
Customer Incivility → Emotional Exhaustion	0.247	0.041	6.075	0.000	Supported	0.166	0.319
Customer Incivility → Job Satisfaction	-0.412	0.043	9.534	0.000	Supported	-0.506	-0.335
Customer Incivility → Organizational Citizenship Behavior	-0.426	0.043	9.891	0.000	Supported	-0.519	-0.351
Customer Incivility → Emotional Exhaustion	-0.031	0.012	2.605	0.009	Supported	-0.054	-0.009
Customer Incivility → Emotional Exhaustion → Organizational Citizenship Behavior	-0.026	0.011	2.265	0.024	Supported	-0.049	-0.004

The results, likely presented in Table V, support the initial hypotheses (H1, H2). A positive and significant relationship exists between rude customer behavior (customer incivility) and employee burnout (emotional exhaustion). This means the more customers are rude, the more burnt-out employees become. Similarly, there's a negative and significant relationship between customer incivility, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior. In other words, rude customers lead to lower job satisfaction. This suggests that burnt-out employees are less likely to go above and beyond their duties. Interestingly, the results also show an indirect outcome of customer incivility on job satisfaction and helpfulness mediated by emotional exhaustion. This means rude customer behavior can indirectly lead to lower job satisfaction and reduced helpfulness, causing employees to feel burnt out. The study examined whether the effect of customer incivility on organizational citizenship behavior is entirely or partially explained by employee burnout (emotional exhaustion). There is ongoing debate about the best way to assess this (mediation analysis). While some methods assume a complete explanation (full mediation), others acknowledge there can be both direct and indirect effects (partial mediation). This study followed a technique that allows for direct and indirect impact (Hair et al., 2017), ultimately supporting the idea that customer incivility can indirectly reduce helpfulness by causing burnout but has a direct negative effect on helpfulness.

5 Conclusion

In the hospitality sector, incivility at work—particularly that of customers—has been documented to occur often and to have a significant negative influence (Grandey et al., 2002). Employees' wellness may adversely affect their interactions with consumers, particularly during stressful encounters (Witt et al., 2004). Furthermore, this unfavorable experience increases deviant behaviors and decreases workers' job performance with country of origin (COO) effects (Blau & Andersson, 2005; Cho et al., 2016). Few studies have looked into the potential detrimental effects of frequent encounters with rude customers in the hospitality sector, even though these incidents often occur at work (Han et al., 2016). This outcome is consistent with earlier studies that demonstrate the substantial impact of surface acting—instead of expressing true emotions—on workers' stress levels (Kim, 2008). The increased stress resulting from interactions with customer incivility is indeed linked to employee burnout, as suggested by the job demands-resources model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Han et al., 2016). The current study findings reconcile with the research that concludes that customer incivility leads to emotional exhaustion, one of the essential

dimensions of burnout (Cho et al., [2016](#)). Moreover, the incivility confronted by customers indirectly contributes to elevated burnout due to the increased level of emotional demands of the job. According to Hockey (1993), employees facing increased emotional job demands must experience burnout as they strive to reduce or maintain their performance levels.

This cascading effect is consistent with earlier studies illustrating the detrimental impact of stressful work environments on workers' emotional exhaustion and depression (Veldhoven et al., [2002](#)). Employee burnout is exacerbated by the emotional demands of their jobs, accounting for approximately one-third of the overall effects of experiencing customer rudeness. Consequently, burnout tends to make employees resentful toward both their coworkers and customers. According to Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, employees constantly try to preserve their residual resources. They are less inclined to act politely toward clients and coworkers (Wright & Hobfoll, [2004](#)). Moreover, according to Lavelle et al. ([2007](#)), employee incivility toward customers is influenced by burnout, suggesting that employee incivility may be directed toward the root cause of burnout. Furthermore, this outcome supports the Affective Event Theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, [1996](#)), which posits that deviant behaviors toward coworkers stem from employees' negative emotions. It is noteworthy that employees are more inclined to reciprocate rudeness towards customers than they are to express their negative feelings towards coworkers.

5.1 Practical Implications

Organizations today are constantly evolving, necessitating change to maintain their competitive edge and achieve performance goals (Bhutta et al., [2024](#)). The results of this study provide important new information for hospitality service professionals. Customer service personnel cannot choose which consumers to assist; customer interactions are an inevitable part of their job. Employee demands and burnout may decrease if training is offered on effectively dealing with challenging clients, such as techniques for calming down irate clients. Managers should let employees have autonomy in handling cases involving hostile consumers, enabling them to take charge of the situation independently.

According to Grandey et al. ([2004](#)), this may cause workers to view these circumstances as less challenging. Employees who endure high emotional demands due to customer incivility are more likely to become burnt out trying to meet these demands. According to earlier studies, organizational interventions are crucial for reducing the negative impacts of stress and improving employee satisfaction (Poulin et al., [2008](#)).

To prevent employee burnout in the long term, employers should provide support to help employees manage these demands effectively. Offering work breaks in a quiet area during busy hours can give employees time to refocus. Additionally, employees may benefit from workshops or training sessions on effective stress management techniques related to their job responsibilities (Poulin et al., [2008](#)). It is also advisable for managers to communicate frequently with staff members to understand their challenges and offer tailored solutions to address them. Frontline staff are more likely to feel secure and experience fewer adverse job outcomes, such as the desire to quit, when they perceive their supervisors as supportive and responsive, particularly in a service context (Guchait et al., [2014](#)). Organizations should also implement strategies to motivate staff to provide high-quality service. It has been suggested that public acknowledgment and recognition systems be established to enhance employees' intrinsic motivations. This fosters collaboration among staff members and promotes continuous improvement in service delivery. To encourage and acknowledge employees' achievements, earlier academics recommended implementing tactics for developing intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic rewards should then be used to promote this positive motivation. They also underlined the importance of these formal awards favorably reinforcing the intended workplace behaviors of employees (Kerr et al., [1977](#)).

Therefore, firms should develop incentive and recognition programs to deter and prevent negative workplace behavior with country of origin (COO) effects. Furthermore, these initiatives may encourage staff members to take on extra roles that are specifically oriented at the company, such as interacting with others politely and putting up with minor annoyances without complaining. One way to increase employee camaraderie and provide them with additional opportunities to engage with customers is through role modeling.

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